[93]LINEAGE--roospa or riks. 613

LINEAL MEASURE--The lineal measures of Ladák, which are exceedingly rough, are as follows:-- 804

1 sor - 1 finger breadth	= about	1/4 inch.
1 lakpa - 5 fingers breadth	= "	4 inches.
1 peetho - distance of span, with thumb and forefinger	= "	8 "
1 thógang - full span, with thumb and little finger	= "	10 "
1 skanggang - distance from elbow to knuckle	= "	14 "
1 thoogang - distance from elbow to tip of fingers	"	18 "
1 domgang - distance from finger tip to finger tip with the arms held out straight from the sides	= "	6 feet.
1 giangtak - as far as the human voice can be heard	= "	300 yards.
1 migthong - as far as a man can be seen with the naked eye. In the clear air of Ladák this would	= "	2 miles.
1 lamphet or "half a day's journey," also called zanlam or tshallam or "the breakfasting distance	= "	6 miles.
ngeemáchik or ngeenlamchik or "a day's journey"	= "	12 "

For further information see under heading "Mile."

LIVID--rdong nakpo gioor ches. If a Ladáki means to say that a person changed colour in any way, owing to fear or shame, or any other unpleasant sensation, he would say his face turned black. But if the change of colour was [94] attributable to any pleasant sensation, he would say his face turned white. 152 822

LOAN--skinba or skinbo or respectfully karkeen; a loan either of money, grain, etc., and on which no interest is charged. Bulon, a loan of any sort, on which interest is charged. Yártey, a loan, when the identical article lent is to be returned. 426

LOCKET--kabzóma. The rectangular, box-like, locket, made of silver or copper, and worn by Ladákis suspended from a necklace or string round the neck. It usually contains musk or religious charms. 301 788

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

By the time she is grown up, a girl should thus have quite a good sized *perag*, which functions as her dowry, in fact she regards it as her bank, for she invests money in turquoises as a provision for widowhood or old age. The mother's *perag* usually goes to the eldest daughter at her marriage, after which the mother must be content with a small one. As the eldest son inherits all land property, so the eldest daughter inherits all ornaments. Unfortunately the number and size of the turquoises on a head-dress are a source of great jealousy, and a lady with a very resplendent *perag* is often one of suspicious morals. In olden times the ladies of high rank in Ladak all wore ear-flaps of sable, brought from beyond Yarkand, but now these are seen only on the Queen and the old Queen Mother. Another custom traceable to a royal indisposition is that of wearing a large gold and silver ornament in front of the neck at weddings. This originated from the desire of a Queen on such an occasion to hide a goitre which disfigured her neck.

The women also have many other ornaments. Ear-rings of seed-pearls, threaded on a large wire hoop, which passes round the whole ear, with one or two turquoises and corals at the bottom of the circle. Necklaces composed of little chased gold amulet boxes, interspersed with coral and turquoise, or other less elaborate ones, made with red beads and little silver ornaments. Silver chatelaines worn on the breast, with picks for nose, ears, teeth and other purposes, and large round brass ornaments at the waist from which leather threads pass to a brass needle-case, to the other side of which are attached a number of chains of cowries, also threaded on leather. Finally bracelet-cuffs, made of chased silver or white shell, used to knock together in salutation but also convenient for keeping back the long sleeves.

Here is another custom the reverse of ours, for whereas European women wear short sleeves, in summer at any rate (the Ladakis probably think this must be to economize stuff), both men and women in this country have them cut very

[½ G.O. turquoise studded headdress. – ANALYST]

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

CHAPTER XXIII

Introduction to the Hemis Mystery Play

A DESCRIPTION of life in Ladak could not be complete without an account of one of the great annual festivals held in the monasteries in the valley, such as the *Gustor* (the offering on the ninth) at Trigtse and at Spitug, or the *Ghanggoni Thsedrup* (the fulfilment of life on the blue hill) at Peang, all of which take place in the winter, whilst the *Thseshu* is held at Hemis in the summer. The last is the most important, its chief feature being the presentation of the famous so-called "mystery play." The festival, as its name indicates, is held on the tenth day of the fifth Buddhist month, which is the birthday of Padma Sambhava, the founder of Lamaism, and still the presiding genius of the red sect. According to records in Sikkim, he was a magician who came north in the seventh century, and convinced the lamas of Tibet that he was sent as an incarnation of the Buddha. But into the pure Buddhism, he introduces the old *Bon Chos* with its devil-worship, and encouraged the most sensual practices, also the eating of meat and drinking of wine, asserting that over-indulgence in all these passions would lead to a state of high trance. Strangely enough, when we were waiting in the ante-room on a visit to the *Skushog*, this sentiment was exactly borne out by a Ladaki, who was participating in the native beer and already in rather an expansive mood. To our remark that it was not right to get drunk and lose control of mind and body, he replied that it was good, for the soul then became happy and blessed.

23: Peter E-3 (1938-?) AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4
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593 home, in turn, while the others go off on commercial journeys. This idea of one brother staying in the house and looking after the common wife is what many anthropologists believe to be the explanation as to why these people practice polyandry; that is, so that they can be sure the children issuing from the marriage will be at least from the same family, even if they are not those of one particular man. Thus, during the war, I saw a Sikh officer (an Englishman) who received a request from one of his soldiers to go home because, he said, his wife had had a child. The officer said, "But you have been away for two years, so how can your wife have had a child? Is that any reason to go back?" And the Sikh answered, "Yes, but my brother was at home," and then retracted his words, because the Sikhs, at least, do not like admitting they are polyandrous, though it certainly exists in the northern part of the Punjab, among them as well as among the Hindu *jats*.

In Leh, I was struck by the fact that, in most families, there seems to be no organization at all. Complete promiscuity apparently exists between the brothers and the common wife, especially during the winter months when the place is very often snowed in completely and the whole family lives in one room because they have not enough fuel to heat the whole house. This I found out both from questioning the people and from hearing details from Europeans who have gone into the question before.

593 Oddly enough, however, in all anthropological books about polyandry, one hears that the brothers, in turn, go in to the wife and signal their presence in the nuptial room to the other brothers by leaving some mark at the door. They either put their sword against the door or their stick, or leave their shoes or hat outside, or hang their beads on a hook at the door as a signal that they are in with the common wife and the other brothers may have no access to the room. When I examined this first-hand, however, and also in the

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593 case of other polyandrous peoples like the
114 Todas and Tiyas, I found that they say
121 this is not practised any longer, but that it
used to be a custom two or three genera-
201 tions back. I have never found a case of
152 its actually being practised today and, for
this reason, I have strong psychoanalytical
suspicions that it has never been practised,
but that this story has been put out by
polyandrous people as an indication of,
what I should call popularly, "wishful
thinking." Each of the brothers would
like, in some way, to have the common
wife all to himself and would like to mani-
fest this virility on his part by hanging up
some emblem at the door. The sword, the
stick, the shoes, the hat, and even the
beads are all, psychoanalytically, symbols
of virility, and it seems as if the men would
like to have this custom which, possibly,
has never existed, and each of them gains
a certain satisfaction in thus imagining a
virility which he feels he does not have.

131 The morality of the polyandrous people
is very high. I mean by this that, as poly-
andry is an institutionalized social system,
they stick to it very strictly. If you ask
missionaries who have been among poly-
androus people, they will, of course, tell
you that polyandry is a very immoral prac-
tice. But if you speak to the people them-
selves, they, on the contrary, consider it
highly immoral not to be polyandrous. If
we take as the definition of morality, con-
formity to the social standards of the set-
ting in which one lives, then one can say
that polyandrous people, at least in this
area which I studied, are very moral. The
old people complain that today the young
ones are getting highly immoral and lax
in not carrying out the tradition of poly-
andry. Certainly, on the borders of India,
where the people come in contact with the
monogamous families of India, or with
Europeans, polyandry is dying out to some
extent.

595 I remember speaking to an old Tibetan
118 called Tocktock in Leh, who told me that,
428 in town, Indian and Turki traders (the
latter from Chinese Turkestan), and Euro-

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595 178 428 pean travelers were introducing the bad habit of monogamous marriage, and that the young men were getting more and more immoral. I suppose he was quite right, and as I was interested to hear his point of view we had quite a conversation about it. He next asked me how, in Europe, we managed to remain wealthy without being polyandrous. He said to me, "Here in Tibet we haven't enough to go around and as we don't want to divide the property up we have to be polyandrous so that we inherit the property without its being divided. But how do you Europeans do it? How do you remain wealthy by being monogamous and dividing up your property?"

595 178 428 329 I must say I had not thought of this before. It only occurred to me when I was talking to this man. So I said, "Yes, now that I think of it, it is probably true that in Europe we do things in a different way. When we marry, each man goes off with his wife and they try to fend for themselves, build up their own family and get their own source of revenue. That is the way we do it. There is enough wealth to go around to found other families." "Yes," the old man said, "That is true. I have noticed among the Tibetans who have become Moslems that this is also the case. They cease being polyandrous, and because of that they then divide up the property. There is not enough to go around. The eldest brother usually gets it and the youngest brothers have to go off with their wives elsewhere to find some work. I have also noticed here that nearly all the Mohammedan families seem to go to Burma and work in the ruby mines there. That is obviously for the same reason you are telling me now about Europeans." Then he was silent for a moment and looked at me in a pensive fashion until suddenly he said, "Now I understand why you Europeans come here. That is why you have got colonies. If you were polyandrous you wouldn't need to!"

152 428 One question I am very often asked is, does jealousy exist within the various

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152 428 houses? I have the impression that it does exist but that it is very highly repressed by this institution of polyandry. Tibetans, when asked if they are jealous among themselves, will always answer that they cannot afford to be jealous because of the economic sanction against it. If they started quarreling among brothers, they would have to divide up the property. They would then be too poor to carry on, and this threat makes it impossible for them to show their jealousy.

152 595 As it is, there seem to be some outlets for it. I have noticed a number of what one might term "unjustified" *magpa* marriages, cases of young men who were married jointly with their brothers to one woman and yet each went off and married an heiress. Such a man could have remained married to the common wife, but was lucky enough to find an heiress he could marry and he certainly did so at once, because it gave him some justifiable motive for having a wife all to himself There are very many such cases of *magpa* marriages which are not justifiable, in the case of the males, except for the desire to break away from a polyandrous family.

152 767 573 A certain amount of neurotic cases among brothers can also be noticed, which shows that jealousy certainly exists unconsciously in their psyche. I saw a young man in Keylong, in Lahaul, where we were staying for a month (or, rather, I heard about it because it had just happened when we arrived there), who had committed suicide because he felt that the common wife was not giving him enough chance of access to her. He was in love with her and his other brothers were obstacles, so he committed suicide. In Leh, I actually saw a young man who for many years, as long as his brothers were alive, had suffered from a paralysis of one of his legs. His brothers died off one after another until he was left alone with the common wife, and queerly enough, that very day he lost the lameness in his leg, so that it looked as if it had been a hysterical manifestation due to repressed aggression

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152 762 593 within him, certainly caused by jealousy of his other brothers for their relations with the common wife.

837 595 684 There are certain instances of extra-marital relations between people in this polyandrous community, but they are highly condemned and heavy sanctions are applied. In a *bagma* marriage, if the woman commits adultery, she is turned out of the house if she is childless, and the brothers choose another wife. If she is with child, she is fined and has to pay out of her personal property. As for the man, the co-respondent, he is beaten and/or has to pay compensation to the legal husbands. In a *magpa* marriage, where the woman is heir to the property, has the care of it and can marry as many men as she desires, infidelity of the wife is the only case in which the husbands can get a divorce. Otherwise, she can divorce them, but not *vice versa*. If the man is the adulterer in such a marriage, nothing is done except in the family where he has committed the adultery. In the case of unmarried people, the woman is usually turned out of the house if she has premarital relations and should attempt to marry the man with whom she has had these relations. If the trespasser is a man, he is treated exactly like an adulterer in the usual *bagma* marriage.

848 597 793 548 276 [824] Illegitimate children are usually hushed up. They are often adopted into some family or are sent to the monasteries as novices, so that nobody knows exactly what their origins are. As far as I could find out, there seems to be no prostitution in Tibet, and husbands suffering from the polyandrous organization do not have that outlet. Something, however, certainly is known about prostitution, for Tibetans, who never smoke, tell you that they do not do so because tobacco was a plant grown with the menstrual flow of a prostitute.

838 000 As far as I could find out, homo-sexuality is condemned, even in the monasteries, and certainly despised if practised, and I could not find any proof of it. But local Europeans who know the

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It all depends upon how people feel about such things, my informants said. Sometimes, the wife will regulate who, of her many husbands, should be with her; at other times, one of the brothers will do so, not necessarily the eldest, but generally the one with the most personality, the one who has the greatest influence with them all. Again, it is possible for the brothers to agree among themselves as to who shall go with their wife for the night, while it is not excluded that they should all of them have relations with her in the same night. Things can be done discreetly, in the dark, with some item of furniture in front of the bed for greater privacy. But this is not always the case, and often relations between husbands and the wife take place with a lamp lit, and in full view of the others, including the children. Not much clothing, however, is discarded, partly out of modesty, but also because it is cold.

I asked here, too, if signals were ever made use of at the door, should the marriage not be consummated in the common room. This question was usually received with great guffaws of laughter; the very idea seemed to amuse them. No, they said, there were no signals; nobody ever left anything at the door. As far as they knew, it had never been done, either.

To my question as to how, then, did they decide who should sleep with the common wife, one of my informants (at the Od-ldan household) looked at me slily and asked if I were, myself, married. When I answered that I was, he asked whether, then, I decided with my wife that, as let us say seven p.m. tonight, we would have intercourse? Naturally not, and he laughed; well, then it was the same with them. Such things took place tacitly, by implicit understanding, and with tact, not in accordance with a pre-arranged programme.

My investigations as to the possibility of jealousy affecting the relations between the husbands of a polyandrous Ladaki family led to the same results as in Lahul. I was told that nobody could afford to be jealous, that it was a luxury in which those who were rich enough to divide up property in other, less austere environments than theirs, could indulge. The Reverend W. Asboe was of the opinion that the ordinary average Ladaki was "not very passionate" as he put it, and that for this reason, they could not really feel the pangs of jealousy. He attributed this lack of passion to the altitude and to the climate which was so cold, and as proof of his allegation, he said that the Moslems, who elsewhere were so fiery about sexual matters and men's honour in these things, were also devoid of passion in Ladak, and often accepted situations there which they would have violently rebelled against elsewhere. No-

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595 body denied, nevertheless, that jealousy was there, ever-present, under
578 the surface. All they said was that it is kept in check by the necessity
152 of the polyandrous system, which in turn is the result of the dearth of resources which consequently should themselves be shared in so bleak an environment.

844 The education of the children in a polyandrous household was the next point which I took up. At birth, I heard, there was no midwifery, mothers usually going to the assistance of their daughters and rendering them the necessary service. After that, it was the mother who naturally
854 looked after the baby in its early infancy, often suckling it for a pro-
[853] tracted period of from one to three years, depending on subsequent pregnancies. Sometimes, a woman would be assisted in the care of the child by one of her own sisters from outside – either from the house of her parents or from the house she had been married into in *bag-ma*.

863 Asked what were the rules of cleanliness taught early to a baby, I was told that there were none. Children were left to do absolutely whatever they liked in this respect, and put outside the house to play in the lanes and fields with other children, without any constraint being imposed upon them. Of course, if they dirtied the house, they were scolded and driven outside, but beyond that attitude, the mother never attempted to control them in such matters at all. (This might actually
54 account for the extraordinary freedom of Tibetans everywhere within
123 their cultural area in what concerns evacuatory functions; both men and women seem to have no shame at all in performing on the streets in public and before everybody's gaze. They will also follow Europeans who try to retire in privacy, to see "how they do it" – one of the most embarrassing things about field-work in Tibet.)

857 Children take to playing very early in the lanes and fields. They make castles of mud and water, and nothing seems to amuse them more during their first years. They then go over to more sophisticated games such as hockey, riding on sticks, playing at being a family, at cultivating the fields with small, imitation hoes, at being bride and bridegroom at a wedding festival. Dolls are made for the girls out of rags, and the boys go about with little axes made of wood. But they seem to tire of such games at times, and often go back to making mud and water pies and constructions.

595 It is at this stage that paternal authority makes itself felt. I asked
855 who was the father who took over control, expecting it to be the eldest, as he is regarded as the head of the family. But I was told that this was not so, and that it was the father who was the most influential who